



Security Council

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LETTER DATED 3 NOVEMBER 1997 FROM THE EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF
THE SPECIAL COMMISSION ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 9 (b) (i) OF SECURITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION 687 (1991) ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
SECURITY COUNCIL

Further to my letter of 2 November 1997 (S/1997/836), I should inform you, and through you the members of the Security Council, that on 3 November, on my instructions as Executive Chairman, teams of the Special Commission attempted to conduct their inspection work in Iraq. Three inspection teams (missile, chemical and biological) departed the Commission's Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre (BMVC) at 0830 hours local Baghdad time for separate inspections. The missile team was the first to reach its inspection site at 0850 hours.

On arrival at the site the Iraqi officials present stated that the inspection could proceed, but not with its personnel of United States nationality. The Chief Inspector of the missile monitoring team told the Iraqi officials that his mission could not proceed on such a basis.

I had given instructions that in the event of such a blockage by the Iraqis, the teams were to terminate their inspection efforts and return to BMVC. As such the teams that were still proceeding to their inspection sites also terminated their missions and returned to BMVC in accordance with my instruction.

I should take this opportunity to recall that in the letter of 29 October to you (S/1997/829), the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq stated some concerns his Government had about the U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance flights flown in support of the Special Commission's inspection and ongoing monitoring and verification work. The suggestion in that letter of 29 October that this work is done on behalf of a Government, and not solely in accordance with the mandate given to the Special Commission by the Security Council, is without foundation. Under these circumstances, I authorized the next U-2 mission and sent a standard letter of notification to the Iraqi authorities on 31 October.



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I must inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 2 November from the Permanent Representative of Iraq which implicitly threatens the safety of this aircraft. I attach this letter for your information.

I would be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council. I stand ready to brief you and the members of the Council on these issues, should you or the members wish.

(Signed) Richard BUTLER

Annex

[Original: Arabic]

Letter dated 2 November 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

With reference to the letter dated 29 October 1997 from the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/829), I should like to affirm our stance concerning the U-2 aircraft as set forth in that letter and to draw your attention to it. Because of its importance, I deem it appropriate to recall it here again. The text in question states as follows:

"I have explained in my letter dated 12 October 1997 addressed to you the question of the U-2 plane used by the Special Commission. The U-2 plane is an American spying plane which has been spying on Iraq and its leadership in order to execute America's hostile policy against Iraq under cover of the Special Commission's operations. It also provides the Special Commission with deliberately misleading information with a view to create problems and superficial crises as specifically happened in June and September 1997. We request that the Special Commission withdraw its cover from that spy plane flying over Iraqi skies and we stand ready to arrive at a neutral formula with the Special Commission, with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council, if there is a need for such activity. In my letter to you of 12 October 1997, I made proposals, such as replacing the U-2 plane by an Iraqi plane which is to be fully placed under the disposal of the Special Commission, or by using a plane belonging to a neutral State that has no special objectives against Iraq."

In the light of current developments, Iraq anticipates that the United States will engage in military aggression against it, as it has done on previous occasions. Accordingly, the entry of a United States spy plane into Iraqi airspace cannot be accepted. We therefore urge you to cancel the overflights scheduled for the U-2 aircraft on 5 and 7 November.

I hope it will be clear that you will bear the responsibility for the consequences that will ensue from any decision by you to send the spy plane to Iraq, especially in circumstances where our anti-aircraft defences are being activated everywhere and are being made ready to meet the possibility of aggression.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
